

1901

THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 1901.

The Remonstrance is published annually by the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. It expresses the views of women in Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, California, South Dakota, and other States who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

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MEETINGS OF STATE ASSOCIATIONS.

ANNUAL meetings have been held recently by three state associations. At Portland, Ore., October 26, the president, in her address, analyzing the vote in June for a woman suffrage amendment to the constitution, called attention to the fact that though only eleven out of thirty-three counties voted against the amendment, these eleven, without exception, contained a large city which the Association had reached, and whose vote carried the county; and she went on to say that this fact is distinctly encouraging, since it proves without question that the work of the Association has been successful, for it was the remote, recently formed, and sparsely settled counties which voted for the amendment.

In Illinois the annual meeting was held at Chicago, November 22, and among many matters of practical and educational interest the president in her address referred to the great number of requests for anti-suffrage literature that had been received from the South, and the very excellent opportunity the Illinois Association had, through a former member, of distributing their papers through that section.

The annual meeting in New York was held December 4, when it was resolved to reorganize the officers and Ex-

ecutive. The plan now adopted will bring the auxiliaries in closer touch with the central Association, thus facilitating the work and making it more effective.

A new auxiliary was organized in Buffalo, N. Y., on Thursday, March 29, by courtesy of Miss E. M. Kent, Mrs. Henry Crane, and Mrs. George Parkhurst. The new auxiliary has fourteen members on its Executive Committee, representing the best type of intelligent and earnest women.

THE SCHOOL VOTE.

It has been asserted, *apropos* of Chicago, that the school vote of women is everywhere decreasing. In Boston the average of the women's school vote for the last seven years has been about six times as large as it was during the first seven years after school suffrage was granted.—*Woman's Journal*, November 10, 1900.

If the foregoing conveys the impression that the school vote in Boston is rapidly increasing, it is misleading. From 1879, when school suffrage was granted, to and including 1899, is twenty-one years. A comparison of the average vote of the last seven years with that of the first seven years gives the result set forth in the *Woman's Journal*, but the average for the last seven years (7,303) is less than the average for the intermediate seven years (7,645). The largest vote was cast in 1888 under the stimulus of a sectarian issue. That year 19,490 women voted. The vote dropped the next year to 10,051, and at no time in the intervening years has it reached even that figure. Last December, in spite of an active agitation and the introduction of important issues, only 9,542 women went to the polls.

SUFFRAGE IN PLATFORMS.

THE officers of the New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Oregon, Iowa, and Tacoma Associations and Committees Opposed to the Extension of the Suffrage to Women addressed a letter of protest to the Republican and Democratic national conventions last summer against the inclusion of woman suffrage planks in the party platforms.

The platform of neither party made any mention of the question.

A HEARING AT WASHINGTON.

ON February 13, 1900, there were hearings at Washington before the House Committee on the Judiciary and the Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage upon a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution extending the franchise to women. The petitioners were represented by Miss Anthony, Mrs. Catt, and other leaders of the suffrage movement. Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge, Mrs. Rossiter Johnson, and others of New York; Miss Emily P. Bissell, of Delaware; Mrs. Barclay Hazard, of California, and Mrs. A. J. George and others of Massachusetts appeared to remonstrate against the proposed amendment. A letter, signed by the officers of the New York, Oregon, and Massachusetts Associations Opposed to the Extension of the Suffrage to Women, was presented to both committees. The letter opposed the amendment on the ground that to extend the suffrage to women would not merely be an invasion of the sovereign rights of the states, but would create social changes of doubtful benefit.

Miss Bissell, in her address before the Senate Committee, remarked that it is not the tyranny but the chivalry of men that American women have to fear. The men of America want to give women everything they need, and the danger is that they will mistake a minority for the majority. She argued that the suffrage movement must be against the opinions of a majority of women, because, notwithstanding that it had been pushed for fifty years, it had not succeeded, although every other women's movement really desired by women during that period had won its way. Miss Bissell said further:—

The suffrage movement is a minority movement, too, in that the four states which have accepted suffrage are not representative of our large communities. Colorado, by the census of 1890, had less inhabitants in the whole state than the city of Baltimore; by the last estimate, made by its governor, it had just about twenty thousand inhabitants in the whole state more than Baltimore, which is not much of a margin. Wyoming's total population is less than the foreign population of Maryland, and Maryland is not a land of immigrants by any means. The population of Idaho is far below the number of colored people in Maryland. Utah (where the admission of women to the suffrage can hardly be said, in view of the recent events, to have elevated the character of the candidates) has less population

than there are negroes in Arkansas; and altogether the four states that have equal suffrage, all put together, have fewer people in them (700,000 fewer) than Chicago, and not half as many as New York City. Results from such states, even if they were conclusive and positive, would still be minority results.

Mrs. Johnson made an argument to show that woman suffrage not only does not promote woman's progress, but is antagonistic to it. The professions were not opened to women through suffrage agitation. The higher education for women has not received its chief inspiration from that source, and changes in laws making them more favorable to women have been secured without woman suffrage. Mrs. Johnson said:—

If the suffrage movement were to disband to-day and no woman ever vote, not a single great interest would suffer. None of woman's wide philanthropies would be harmed; women's colleges would be unaffected; the professions would continue to give diplomas to qualified women; tradesmen would still employ women; good laws would not be repealed, and bad laws would be no more likely to be framed; literature would not suffer; homes would be no less secure; woman's civic work would not cease; nor would there be any more disposition than there is to-day to remove to a state where woman still had "freedom."

A DOUBTFUL PUBLIC SERVICE.

"I FEEL sure that the credit of a whole class will generally be found to depend on the credit of its representative leaders, of what I may call its aristocracy of brain or character; and that a woman who had won a place as a really distinguished authority in any of the higher questions with which politics are concerned would have conferred more public esteem on the whole body than the vote will ever do. Let me give a single instance of what I mean. There has been nothing in my memory, till this war, that roused women to the same degree as the question of Home Rule. Women I knew, who had never troubled about any public question before, flung themselves with a paroxysm of zeal into one camp or the other, made Primrose Lodges and Liberal Leagues, and discovered the joys of public life. There has been, so far as I know, not one serious thinker or writer among them all on the subject of Land, Emigration, Taxation, or a Catholic University. They have contributed nothing to the controversy except heat. When it ceased to be a matter of public talk, they let it alone with careless cynicism. Their busi-

ness has been merely to register existing public sentiment on one side or the other; nor was one found to stand aside from party, to carry into this great political problem independent research and observation, to ignore the prejudices and add to the science of government in this kingdom. The magazines are open to them, the press and the platform; all the most powerful means of guiding public opinion; the most powerful, too, of winning respect for the whole class. I can imagine an enemy saying, Is it any use to add the vote, except, indeed, as the public function which can be discharged with the greatest ease, the least intelligence, and, perhaps, the most inconsiderable results? Does the credit and reputation of women lie here?"—*Alice Stopford Green, in "The Nineteenth Century," Living Age, Vol. 225, p. 774.*

UNCERTAINTY OF WOMAN'S VOTE.

AN *Associated Press* despatch from Chicago, of October 22, 1900, reported that only about 1,500 women had registered for the privilege of voting for school commissioners. In 1894, the number was 20,815.

The *Boston Herald* of October 30, 1900, said, editorially:—

Woman suffrage in Great Britain seems to be working very much as it does over here. Women entitled to vote could exercise a deciding influence in the local elections now pending in London, but the canvassers find them, with rare exceptions, entirely apathetic. This has been the unvarying experience with woman franchise in London. Only twenty-two per cent of the qualified women voters exercise the franchise at county council elections.

FOR WOMEN TO DECIDE.

IT looks just now as if woman suffrage were amenable to the reproof that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Yesterday there was a high joint debate before the Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage and the House Committee on the Judiciary in which friends of woman suffrage argued the question against their opponents. The occasion was, perhaps, the first of its kind, since all that has been said by state associations on both sides of the question was gathered up into the most effective expression that could be given to it. One thing is evident,—that the general public may ignore the whole matter until women interested in it decide whether there is to be such a question or not in national politics.—*New York Commercial Advertiser, February 14, 1900.*

A DECLINING CAUSE.

THE record of the vote in Massachusetts legislatures upon woman suffrage measures during the last six years is interesting, from the evidence which it affords that the cause is declining.

The contests have been made, of late years, wholly in the House, the Senate acting in concurrence, usually without debate or a roll-call.

The issue has been joined upon a proposed amendment to strike the word "male" from the constitution, or upon municipal suffrage, or upon license suffrage.

Taking these propositions in the order enumerated,—the House in 1897 rejected a resolve to submit a constitutional amendment by a vote of 53 yeas to 86 nays. In 1898, it rejected a similar resolve by a vote of 44 yeas to 97 nays; in 1899, by a vote of 31 yeas to 82 nays; in 1900, it accepted the adverse report of its committee without a roll-call.

As to municipal suffrage, the House in 1895 refused a third reading to a municipal suffrage bill by a vote of 97 yeas to 137 nays, including pairs. In the fall of that year, the question of the expediency of granting the municipal ballot to women was submitted to the men and women of the state, with the result that the men declared against it by a majority of 100,006, and only about four per cent of the women qualified to vote expressed a wish for the ballot. When, notwithstanding this vote, a municipal suffrage bill was introduced in the next legislature, the House defeated it without a roll-call. In 1897 and 1898 also, it accepted adverse reports upon municipal suffrage bills without a division. In 1899, it refused to substitute a bill for an adverse committee report, and accepted the report. In 1900, the measure was pressed to a vote, with the result that only forty members, including those who were paired, went on record in favor of it, while 132 opposed it.

The vote on license suffrage is not less significant. In the House of 1897, the proposition was at first successful, and a bill was substituted for the adverse committee report, March 10, by a vote of 83 yeas to 82 nays, with 18 pairs. A week later, the bill was defeated on the third reading by a vote of 81 yeas to 98 nays, with 27 pairs. In 1898, the House

refused to substitute a bill by a vote of 18 yeas to 74 nays, with 42 pairs. In 1899, a similar attempt to substitute failed by a vote of 51 to 94. In 1900, the cause was regarded as so hopeless that no hearing was given on the question, and no bill was introduced.

The year 1900 found the suffrage cause at its lowest ebb in the legislature, with the license suffrage movement abandoned, the only suffrage measure which came to a vote—that for municipal suffrage—defeated by the heaviest vote on record, and "leave to withdraw" accepted on all other suffrage propositions without a division.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN COLORADO.

THE leaders of the woman suffrage movement in the East have placed considerable emphasis upon the fact that the Colorado legislature of 1899 passed unanimously a resolution declaring woman suffrage a signal success in that state. The value of such an endorsement depends largely upon the character of the endorser, and upon this point the Denver correspondent of the *Indianapolis Press* wrote, under date of December 12, 1899:—

If these leaders knew what every one in this state who has given any attention to public affairs knows, they would certainly have very, very little to say of such championship of their cause. That that legislature was the most corrupt, the most unscrupulous, the most unprincipled of all of those with which Colorado has been afflicted—and it is nowhere questioned that the Centennial state has had even more than its fair share of such—not even its members dare deny. The *Rocky Mountain News*, the blindest of blind partisan organs, has virtually said as much on various occasions, and during the recent state campaign not one public speaker had the extreme effrontery to even attempt to defend the assembly.

Less than a month after this same legislature adopted this mockery of an endorsement of woman suffrage, it passed by a sweeping majority a bill to license prize fighting in the state. And the governor signed the bill in defiance of the protests of the best women and the ministers of all denominations.

If the woman suffrage advocates in the East feel that a legislature which will declare one day that the participation of women in politics has been a blessing and the next will cater to the most disreputable elements is worthy of even faint laudation, they are welcome to rejoice in such endorsement.

SUFFRAGE DEFEAT IN OREGON.

JUNE 4, 1900, there was submitted to the electors of Oregon a proposed amendment to the constitution to confer full suffrage upon women.

The amendment was defeated. The affirmative vote was 26,265; the negative vote, 28,402.

In the suffrage newspapers, this result has been reported and commented on as if the extent of their defeat were measured by the difference between the affirmative and negative votes,—that is, 2,137 votes. This is not the case. Section 1 of Article XVII of the constitution of Oregon requires that in order that a proposed amendment may be embodied in the constitution, it must be ratified by a majority of the electors voting at the election.

At the election on the fourth of June, 1900, there were 81,950 votes cast for Justice of the Supreme Court. The ratification of an amendment, therefore, would have required an affirmative vote of 40,976. Only 26,265 votes were cast in favor of the equal suffrage amendment, which fell 14,711 votes short of the number necessary to ratification.

"REMONSTRANTS" IN AUSTRALIA

THE following despatch, published in the *London Times* for August 22, 1900, shows that the conservative women of Australia are following the example of such women in the United States and England in remonstrating against woman suffrage:—

MELBOURNE, August 21.

The women of Victoria have started a movement against woman suffrage on the lines of the American women's anti-suffrage movement. A petition opposing the Woman Suffrage Bill, now before the Legislative Council, has been signed by 15,000 women in three weeks.

It would seem that the remonstrant movement was effective, for a despatch from Melbourne, December 21, announced that the Legislative Council of Victoria had for the sixth time rejected the woman suffrage bill; and had also rejected a proposal to submit the question to a referendum.

CONSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS.

UNDER the title "Is Municipal Suffrage Constitutional?" the last number of THE REMONSTRANCE printed an article commenting on the decision of the Supreme Court of Michigan, which declared the municipal suffrage act of 1893 in that state unconstitutional. The ground on which this decision was based was that the source of all authority to vote at popular elections is the constitution, and that wherever the constitution has prescribed the qualifications of electors, they cannot be changed or added to by the legislature or otherwise, except by an amendment to the constitution. The court quoted the provision of the Michigan constitution that electors shall be male citizens, and affirmed that the terms are applicable to all elections.

A similar decision was rendered in July, 1900, by Judge Eichelberger, of Iowa. The case decided was an injunction brought by citizens of Ottumwa against the city council and municipal officers of that city. The city had been offered \$50,000 for a public library on the condition that the city guarantee \$5,000 annually for its support. According to the statute, women were allowed to vote on the proposition to accept the offer, and by their votes it was carried. The opponents of the measure began injunction proceedings; and Judge Eichelberger declared the statute under which the women had voted unconstitutional, on the ground that the Iowa constitution does not recognize as voters any except male adult citizens.

The principle involved in these decisions is of far-reaching application. It seems probable that, in any state which has constitutional provisions regulating the suffrage similar to those of Michigan and Iowa, the courts, if appealed to, would pronounce invalid any attempt to confer the ballot upon women save by constitutional amendment.

The constitutional provision in Michigan is in these terms:—

"Art. 7. Section 1. Every male citizen . . . shall be an elector and entitled to vote; but no citizen or inhabitant shall be an elector or entitled to vote at any election unless he shall be above the age of 21 years," etc.

The constitutional provision in Iowa is as follows:—

RECENT DEFEATS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

IN 1898.

Proposed woman suffrage amendments to State constitutions were defeated in the legislatures of Massachusetts, Ohio, and Iowa; a license suffrage bill was defeated in the Massachusetts House; adverse reports on municipal suffrage and presidential suffrage bills were accepted by the Massachusetts legislature without a division; the commission appointed in Rhode Island to revise the constitution rejected all propositions to make provision for woman suffrage, the Kentucky legislature rejected a proposition to exempt from taxation the property of women while they are not permitted to vote; and proposed woman suffrage amendments to the constitution were defeated at the polls in South Dakota and Washington by majorities of 3,285 and 9,882 respectively.

IN 1899.

In Arizona, a bill granting full suffrage to women passed the lower branch of the legislature, but was defeated in the upper.

In Arkansas, a school suffrage bill was defeated, 8 to 16.

In California, a bill granting school suffrage to women was killed by the pocket veto of the governor.

In Connecticut, a bill conferring municipal suffrage upon women was defeated in the House, 63 to 103. The bill was defeated in the Senate, 9 to 12.

In Illinois, bills allowing women to vote for town officers and allowing property-holding women to vote on questions regarding the expenditure of public funds were defeated in the Senate. Bills conferring presidential suffrage and license suffrage also failed.

In Iowa, a resolve for a constitutional amendment giving women full suffrage was defeated.

In Maine, petitioners for a bill to exempt women from taxation until they are allowed to vote were given "leave to withdraw."

In Massachusetts, a proposed amendment to the constitution giving women full suffrage was rejected in the House, 31 to 82. A license suffrage bill was defeated 51 to 94, and a municipal suffrage bill was also defeated. The Senate concurred in this action.

In New Mexico, a school suffrage bill was defeated in the lower House.

In New York, a bill permitting women to vote on questions of municipal improvements, and a bill requiring that at least one third of the members of boards of education appointed by mayors shall be women, was defeated.

In Nevada, the legislature rejected a resolution for a woman suffrage amendment.

In Oklahoma, the lower House passed, and the Senate rejected, a proposition to give women full suffrage.

In Missouri, a proposed constitutional amendment, striking out the word "male" as a qualification for voters, failed.

In Washington, a proposition to permit women to vote on the question, "Shall women be enfranchised?" was defeated in the committee of constitutional revision.

In West Virginia, a bill giving women full suffrage was defeated.

IN 1900.

In Iowa, a resolution to submit to the voters an amendment to the constitution giving full suffrage to women was defeated in the House. The vote was 43 yeas, 55 nays. In the Senate, the resolution had a majority of two votes, but fell short of the required constitutional majority.

In Massachusetts, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, only 40 members, including pairs, voting in favor of it, while 132 voted in the negative. The House accepted the committee report "leave to withdraw" on all other suffrage propositions without a division.

In New York, the Senate, early in the session, by a vote of 26 to 17 adopted a resolution, declaring it inexpedient to attempt any change in the statutes relating to woman suffrage. Later, it defeated a bill which had passed the Assembly, providing that taxpaying women in villages might vote on questions of municipal taxation.

In Ohio, a resolve for the submission of a woman suffrage amendment to the voters was defeated in the House.

In Oregon, June 4, an amendment to the constitution to confer full suffrage upon women was defeated at the polls. The affirmative vote was 26,265, which fell 14,711 short of the number necessary to ratification. The negative vote was 28,402.

In Vermont, a bill permitting taxpaying women to vote in municipal elections was reported adversely by the Committee on the Judiciary, and was defeated by the Senate.

"Art. 2. Section 1. Every male citizen of the United States, at the age of 21 years . . . shall be entitled to vote at all elections which are now or hereafter may be authorized by law."

The *Woman's Journal*, commenting editorially upon the Iowa decision, denies that it is, as the newspapers had described it, a "reverse for woman suffrage," and adds that "the suffragists have long been aware that no form of state or local suffrage can be conferred upon women under the constitution of the state of Iowa." This is an important admission, for if it is true of Iowa, it must be equally true of any state whose constitution contains the same provisions. Here, for example, is the provision of the constitution of Connecticut:—

"Art. 8. Amendment. Every male citizen of the United States, who shall have attained the age of 21 years . . . shall, on his taking such oath as may be prescribed by law, be an elector."

This provision, it will be noticed, is practically identical with that of the Iowa constitution. Why should Connecticut suffragists annually besiege the legislature of that state with appeals for legislation conferring the ballot upon women, when the constitution of that state contains provisions which, in the case of Iowa, the *Woman's Journal* admits are an insurmountable barrier to the bestowal of the ballot on women in any way save by constitutional amendment?